Dublin, March 10. 1860

Dear Mr May — The books came to hand *via* Graves a few days ago, after I had almost despaired of them. I sent them off by post to the several persons to whom they were directed. Among them was one, however, directed to nobody & I don't know what I am to do with it. It is a copy of Peter Still. Douglass is I think doing his best to damage the Am. A. S. Society whenever he can do so without an open declaration of hostilities. He endeavours to show that the Southern Disunionists & the Disunion abolitionists are aiming at ~~the~~ ~~s~~ an object which can only result in delivering the slaves over hopelessly & helplessly into the hands of their tyrants. George Thompson made a capital speech on this subject in Glasgow which was published (with omissions of a very important character to its completeness) in the *North British Mail*, a Glasgow paper. At my request G. T. has sent me the filling up slips & I mean to give the whole in the next Advocate. It is I think as complete & clear a reply as I have seen to all that has been said about the *anti*-slavery tendency of the Union

very defective. He has placed very little confidence in me & when pushed to close quarters avoids much reference to the Harper Ferry affair. I think him an honest man & he has no *blarney*.

And the Constitution. - - - I am a good deal puzzled by the sanguine language used by Mrs Chapman (in her letters) respecting the prospects of the cause. The way in which the Northern States receive the insults & injunctions of the Slaveholders exhibits a degree of meekness which one would hardly expect from a people who are so ready to pick a quarrel & go to war if Great Britain only ventures to look awry at them. I dont know what it is that is to produce the crisis we have been so long looking for. As far as I can judge the condition of the popular mind in England is in every way more hopeful & respectable than that of the United States - where, as far as we can judge from the newspapers, the most extraordinary gullibility & proneness to be led by the nose prevails amongst the mass of the population. For the first time for more than a year I had a letter from Anne Weston, this day, from Rome. Lucia is still very delicate & confined to her room. Caroline's health seems to have suffered from the unwholesome Roman summer. Anne's eyes are still unable for much exertion. Mrs Browning is there - full of hope about Italy. Mrs Stowe with her daughter & a daughter of H. W. Beecher are also in Rome so is Theodore Parker whom they often see. He is in a feeble state — but Anne Weston talks as if he might live for years — though. The Westons are so secretive about their own affairs that I suppose you had better for my sake, not mention that I told you any thing about them. I have often remarked in families that are very closely knit together, they make secretiveness lest other people should know any thing about them. When we come to a due sense of what a very small space we individually fill in the world, I apprehend this feeling is likely to disappear. My son Richard has been looking about for some regular way of life — or rather some permanent plan of money making — but has not yet succeeded. He don't like any laborious & not very remunerative employment & I hope he may make a wise choice. I have been a hard working man for many years & am beginning to grow lazy. I don't feel the spring in my mind that once existed there & the absence of this creates a very sensible void.

I wonder what S. S. Foster would say to Thompson's Speech. To me it appears not to admit of refutation. It is a mystery to me that the Constitution should be an object of such veneration that a man like Forbes should puzzle his brains to make it plain to himself that it means actually something very different from its practical acceptation. Why not draw up another so plain in its terms that all who run may read.

Talking of my son, reminds me of one very great advantage that you have over us in the ease & freedom from care & anxiety with which young men are launched on the sea of life. Here it is a subject of grave deliberation & serious apprehension. I would like to know how near your boy is to Bunker Hill — also whether A.K.F. unites with her husband in his conversion to new political views

Yours very truly

Richd D Webb

I found that John Wilsons name is John Martin. He has gone to Liverpool. I have a collection of about 50 dollars in my hands made on his behalf. His arm has greatly recovered. Mr. Henthal is kind to him. His memory of names is very defective. He has placed very little confidence in me & when pushed to close quarters avoids much reference to the Harpers Ferry affair. I think him an honest man & he has no blarney.

Ms.B.1.6 v.15, p.54